

DRAFT

Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting Minutes

December 11, 2019, 8am – 9:30am

City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Ave, Council Chambers

Minute Taker: Susy Jones

Members Present: Ilana Bebachick, Debby Galef, Rob Gogan, Martha Henry, Susy Jones, Debby Knight, Laura Nichols, Michael Papas, Quinten Steenhuis, Matthew St Onge, Mary Verhage, Kristen Watkins

Members Absent: Meera Singh

Staff Present: John Bolduc, Bronwyn Cooke, Mike Orr

Members of the Public Present: Ted Live, Helen Snively, Katharine Davis, Fred Hewett

1. Housekeeping, 8am (5 min)

- November minutes approved.

2. CPAC/RAC collaboration on consumption-based GHG emissions

- John Bolduc and Bronwyn Cooke introduced themselves. Fred Hewett, member of CPAC also in attendance.
- Discussed joint subcommittee idea.
- Current Cambridge GHG Inventory: about 80 % energy and buildings; transportation is about 11 %; waste is small component of overall emissions.
- Are we underrepresenting materials we consume and associated GHG emissions?
 - Referred to efforts by “C40 Cities” – 40 global cities including Boston that work on climate change. Some have done a “consumption based inventory” which factors in all materials going in and out of a community – making, transporting, and disposal. When you do this, you see more emissions from consumption.
 - Seems like a missing piece from current inventory in Cambridge.
- How could we incorporate consumption into city’s climate action planning?
- Scope 3 – Cambridge focuses on waste + just end of life of waste (we currently estimate commercial, not robust data)
- How are other cities addressing this?
 - John said cities are thinking about food, plastics, producer responsibility, clothing and textiles.
 - Bronwyn can send around C40 report.
- Suggestion that things people use in daily lives are more prominent than bigger concepts like climate change. Maybe we need a metric on consumption.
- Reducing food waste has a big GHG impact.
- John Bolduc – we could look at material flows in Cambridge.
- RAC could look at scope of subcommittee reach and revise and reduce a bit to make it achievable, and not overlap on Zero Waste Plan efforts.
- Final scope to be decided at first meeting.
- John – this could be a way to break down silos between DPW + CDD. It can be useful to get outside perspectives from committees.
- 3-4 people might be interested in subcommittee from RAC.
- Mike Orr - Textiles + food waste are the common thread.
 - In recent waste audit there were many textiles and durable goods + electronics + string lights.
 - Mattresses and EPR are another thread. We’ve recycled about 110 tons of mattresses. Could follow LCA of those streams.

- Bronwyn – we don't know a whole lot about commercial waste. What advice/support can we give businesses? We need to understand the big picture better. Subcommittee could help.
- Next steps for subcommittee:
 - January - define/refine scope.
 - Meet after our Jan meeting.
 - Schedule a doodle poll for mid/late Jan subcommittee meeting.
 - Bronwyn will send reports to review.

3. City Updates and End-Of-Year Reflections

- New RAC Members:
 - Farewell to Michael and Matthew.
 - 19 new applicants to RAC, Mike will consider best mix of skills, etc.
 - 18-24 people on new committee – could be more opportunities for subcommittees.
 - Would like to enlarge our understanding of commercial property management experience. What about someone from the construction industry? Would love to see someone with restaurant or café experience. This is a critical area as we look at single use service ware.
 - A small business owner perspective would be useful.
 - Is there someone from a business council or group that could represent these interests if owners too busy?
 - It would be great to have people who have time to volunteer outside of monthly meetings.
- Single Use Plastics
 - Letter sent to DPW Commissioner, meeting with Councilor Zondervan to discuss single-use plastic after RAC letter received from RAC.
 - City Manager and DPW Commissioner will resume conversation in January. This is a new and complex ordinance.
- Compost, waste sorts, data
 - Curbside Compost: rolling out 250 units this week. Added 1200-1500 households since September.
 - One more trash audit tomorrow. 5-6 categories of sorting. Results in January.
 - Are waste audit evaluations compatible with C40 consumption analysis? It would be nice to align criteria with consumption based GHG inventory.
 - Suggestion to be systematic about waste audits, laying out 5-year plan. Where are we trying to go?
 - Current mechanism is to do waste audits around same time each year; HDR suggests doing a totally random week.
 - "Food in containers" was a large part of waste audits. Could there be a category about that in waste audit methodology?

4. Closing, 9:15 (15 min)

- Public Comment
 - Could we have a category of "super volunteers"?
 - Could there be an RAC hybrid, committee + volunteer group?
- Action Plan/Decisions
 - Schedule a doodle poll for subcommittee meeting for mid/late Jan.
 - Bronwyn will send reports to review.
 - Last minute people can join waste audit leaving DPW tomorrow at 7:45AM.
 - Susy will send out "Better Alternatives List" from Plastics Pollution Coalition.
- Announcements
 - Fix It Clinic in Allston – Feb 8 (one this Saturday in JP).
 - Think about a spring Cambridge Fix-It Clinic.

- Cambridge Fixing and Repairing Community. Facebook community group that Mike runs, 717 people following page, would love to figure out how to build that out more. Can we post DIY videos, etc?
- Boston Building Resources to have net zero carbon free building! Matthew thanks us all.